

# High-Quality Inclusive Pre-K Environments that Promote Pro-social Behavior

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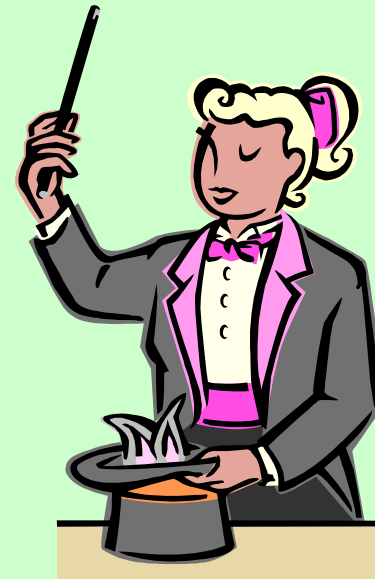
# What skills children need to be able to do by the time they enter kindergarten (Ladd, 2004):

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- Initiate interactions with classmates and teachers;
- Respond to classmates & teachers social overtures;
- Exhibit prosocial behaviors
- Refrain from engaging in aggressive behaviors;
- Form supportive relationships with children and adults.

# WHAT DO MOST PEOPLE WANT?

- One “MAGIC” workshop, tool, or technique to make all the negative behaviors disappear!
- Me too!



# Keep Your Sense of Humor!



# Activities Young Children Enjoy

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- Playing on a swing
- Painting at an easel
- Doing a puzzle

**BUT**

Done individually  
Limit opportunity for  
positive peer social  
interactions



# Environmental Strategies

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- Increase Positive Social Interactions
- Require little adult intervention once the planning and organization are done



# Environmental Strategies

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## WHAT ARE THEY?

Changes & adaptation to:

- Physical environment
- Schedule
- Activities
- Materials

Encourage positive social interactions between children



# Changes & Adaptations to Examine

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- Group Composition
- Physical Environment
- Classroom Activities
- Classroom Materials



# Group Composition

- Make certain that children with good social skills are always encouraged to be involved in activities with less socially skilled peers



# Physical Environment

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Ensure ample space for group, social interactions within centers

Periodically rotate or change materials within centers

## RESULT

Increase the chances peer interaction takes place



# Physical Environment Dramatic Play/Pretend Play



# Physical Environment

## Cozy Area



# Classroom Activities

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- Meaningful & fun for all children
- Give children time & attention when they are playing together
- Keep children near socially competent peers
  - » Increases positive interactions
  - » Reduces problem behaviors



# Classroom Activities

## Refrigerator Matching Game



# Classroom Activities

## Sign-In Center



# Classroom Materials

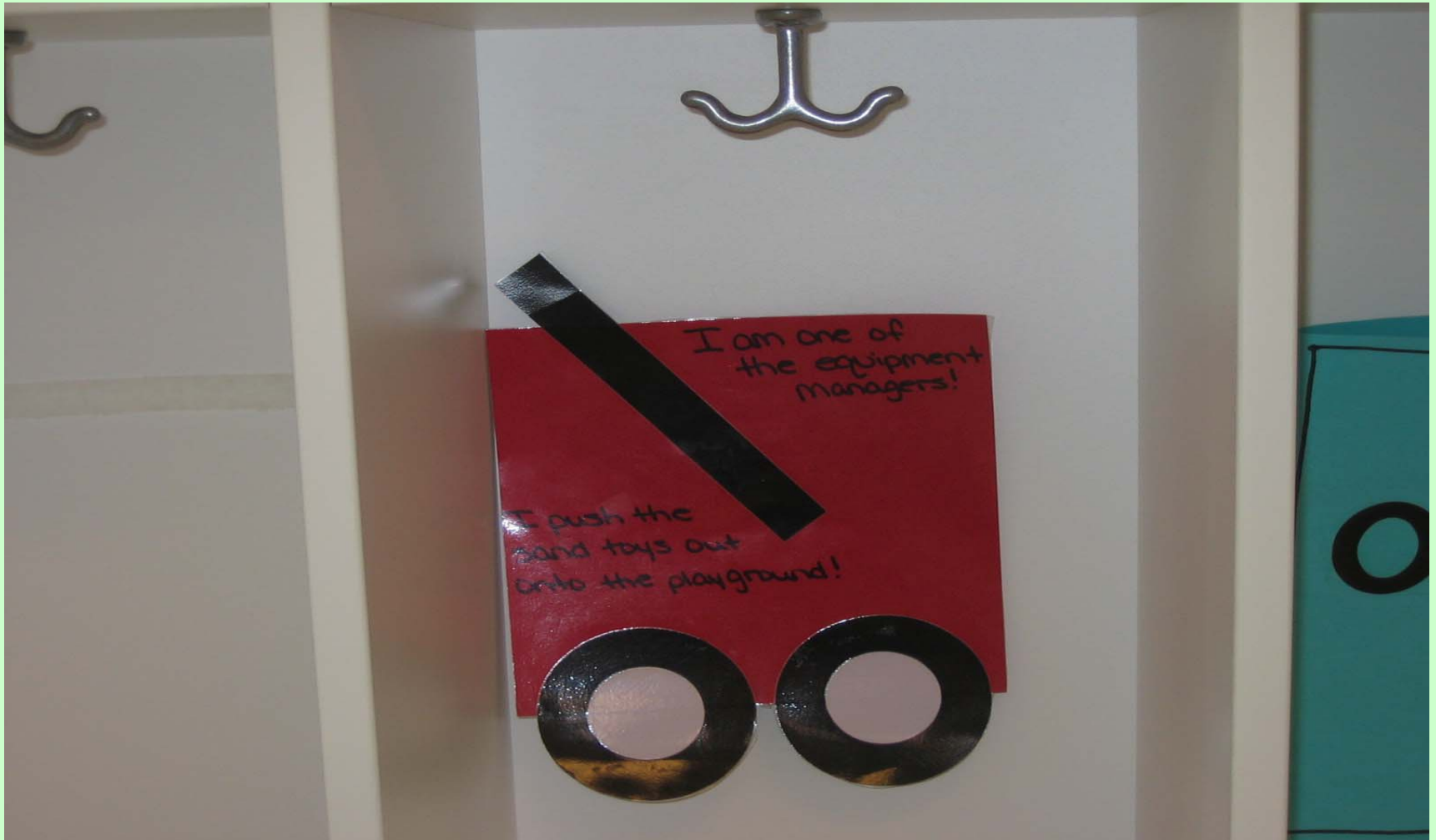
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- New or novel items in the environment can increase social interactions
- Toy rotation system
  - » Cost efficient way to maintain “newness”
  - » Simply involves changing and rotating the materials available to children



# Classroom Materials

## Classroom Jobs



# Classroom Materials

## Dramatic Play/Pretend Play



# Classroom Materials con'd

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Use toys and materials  
that will promote  
cooperation and sharing

For example:

- Large play items such as rocking boats & wagons require children to coordinate actions
- Replace easels with large pieces of paper taped to wall



# To use environmental strategies effectively

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You need planning time to examine

- The daily schedule
- Physical environment
- Classroom activities

Plus



Commitment to *daily* implementation of these strategies around routine activities in the classroom

# What Do Children Need?

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- Enough to eat, enough sleep, good health.
- To feel safe and secure
- To feel loved
- To feel like they are accepted, that they belong in their family and their Preschool Program.